

Prepared Statement by Mr. Aziz Pahad, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on Africa

September 2002

"The New Partnership for Africa's Development: An African Initiative"

Chairman Royce and distinguished members of the House Committee on International Relations' Subcommittee on Africa. It's an honor to be here today in the presence of such esteemed legislators and friends of Africa. I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of your Subcommittee and the House International Relations Committee for this opportunity to discuss such an exciting and promising initiative from the continent of Africa and the cradle of mankind: The New Partnership for Africa's Development. Indeed, such an interaction is long overdue.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to working with you and the Members of this Subcommittee and the House Committee on International Relations, on ways in which we can cooperate on forging such a partnership between the leadership and peoples of Africa and the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I am aware of, and greatly value, you and your Subcommittee's friendship and commitment to the Africa continent. You have graced the African and South African shores on many occasions, and it is very good to see you again, this time on the shores of your beautiful country.

I really look forward to continuing this friendship and commitment well beyond this hearing, and believe that this will be but the first of many interactions with the Subcommittee, Committee, and the United States Congress to build a new Africa that is mutually beneficial for all of our peoples. Just as together we can cast an eye back and look with gratitude at the fundamental and irrevocable way that the Congress of the United States of America contributed to bringing about a miracle of change in South Africa through the CAAA, so too do I relish the day when we can stand together and cast an eye back and marvel at the fundamental and irrevocable way that the Congress of the United States of America contributed to bringing about a miracle of change in Africa through NEPAD.

Chairman Royce, at the outset, I believe that it is important to recognize that it is but one year and one week since the United States was attacked by ruthless and cowardly terrorists. Let me take this opportunity to reiterate the solidarity and sorrow that the African people share with you when we remember the American and African lives that were tragically lost on September 11. Perhaps the only consoling fact that we can bring out of such a tragedy is the fact that our past, present, and future are inextricably linked, and that we must work together to ensure that we bring about peace, stability, and justice for all the peoples of the world.

In our ongoing efforts to bring about peace, stability, and justice for all, we believe that the current U.S. Administration and Congress are committed to Africa and therefore are willing to support NEPAD. Such support is clearly in the national interests of the USA in a positive and negative sense. A stable, peaceful, and prosperous Africa provides many opportunities for the USA in terms of access to resources, not least of which is oil as the USA seeks new energy sources, the provision of viable investment opportunities in an emerging market, and access to an untapped consumer base. Africa's contribution to the global eco-system and to bio-diversity is also invaluable.

In a negative sense, an Africa consumed by poverty, conflict, and instability will impact on the global environment in terms of transnational crime, drug smuggling, trafficking in weapons, terrorism, illegal immigration, the spread of disease, and environmental degradation. We all have a moral and material duty to ensure that such conditions are reversed. Pockets of deep

poverty and dissatisfaction, weak and failed states are in nobody's interests. The benefits and opportunities provided by globalization must be extended to all for it to be sustainable.

To adopt a "wait and see attitude" would be a grave error. The present winds of change in Africa need to be supported and sustained. It is vital that success stories are generated quickly in order to build and maintain momentum and to provide encouragement to the reform efforts.

I know that the issue of Zimbabwe will be cited as a reason for such a "wait and see" attitude, but it is not a reasonable basis for such an approach.

NEPAD, as an evolving process not yet in operation, cannot be used to handle or be accountable for an existing crisis, i.e. Zimbabwe. Existing processes and institutions are in place to handle the situation, hence the decision under the Commonwealth process. This signifies a significant development in the history of Africa, premised as it always was on a system of non-interference in national sovereignty issues. Statements on Zimbabwe by President Mbeki, amongst others, have been consistent over time, calling for free and fair elections, for the crisis to be resolved peacefully, for matters to be handled according to the rule of law, for violence to stop, for a process of legal and transparent land reform, for illegal land invasions to stop, and for a process of national dialogue.

Furthermore, a whole continent cannot be held ransom under a system of collective punishment according to the behavior of one state. NEPAD cannot be discarded, before even being implemented, on the basis of one existing crisis. On the contrary, it should first be given a chance to operate and to work before it is judged on its results. Lastly, NEPAD cannot be expected to deliver all 54 states in pristine condition. NEPAD is a long-term process designed to change an entire paradigm and way of doing business on the continent on the part of all role-players. This will be a long-term process and cannot deliver instant success. It needs to be supported over the long term to ensure that it is sustainable and successful.

NEPAD is about changing the begging bowl syndrome and past donor-recipient relationships. It is about Africa taking ownership of its own development agenda and of taking responsibility for its own future, as well as about building a new partnership with the international community based on mutual accountability. In this process of ensuring the conditions for development, of promoting an environment conducive for investment (both domestic and international) and of reducing the risk profile of doing business on the continent, many opportunities will open up for the private sector. The USA should support this process as it is in your interests to have a stable and peaceful Africa.

Your support is required not only in terms of ODA but also in other areas, e.g. peace and security, education, health, capacity building, promotion of private sector investment, debt relief, market access, agricultural subsidy and non-tariff barrier reform, and more equitable international political, financial, and trading institutions and systems that are responsive to Africa's needs. ODA reform and support is but one aspect of the overall integrated socio-economic development strategy represented by NEPAD. NEPAD is a holistic, integrated sustainable development initiative for the economic and social revival of Africa. It is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction that they have a pressing duty to the African people to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a world economy and body politic.

The initiative is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalizing world. It is a call for a new relationship of constructive partnership between and among Africans themselves and between Africa and the international community to overcome the development chasm. The partnership is to be founded on a realization of common interest, obligations, commitments, benefit, and equality.

The initiative is premised on African states making commitments to good governance, democracy and human rights, which endeavoring to prevent and resolve situations of conflict and instability on the continent. Coupled to these efforts to create conditions conducive for investment, growth and development are initiatives to raise the necessary resources to

address the development chasm in critical sectors that are highlighted in the Program of Action, such as infrastructure, education, health, agriculture, and ICT. Resources will be mobilized by way of increasing domestic savings and investment, by improving the management of public revenue and expenditure, and by increasing capital flows via further debt relief, increased targeted ODA flows, FDI, and private capital.

At the core of the NEPAD process is its African ownership, which must be retained and strongly promoted, so as to meet the legitimate aspirations of the African peoples. While the principle of partnership with the rest of the world is equally vital to this process, such partnership must be based on mutual respect, dignity, shared responsibility and mutual accountability.

The African Union Summit of July 2002 adopted a "Declaration on the Implementation of NEPAD". The Declaration endorsed the Progress Report and Initial Action Plan, that builds on the NEPAD strategic framework document accepted by the OAU at its Summit in Lusaka in July 2001, and called on states to urgently implement the various detailed priority programs, encouraged all member states to adopt the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, to accede to the African Peer Review Mechanism, and to popularize the NEPAD.

Lastly, it mandated the NEPAD structures to continue their work until the next Summit in Maputo in 2003 and it decided to expand the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee by one representative per region, i.e. to 20 members.

The Initial Action Plan elaborates the first phase for the implementation of NEPAD and proposes specific actions and instruments in a number of identified priority areas.

The Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic, and Corporate Governance and the African Peer Review Mechanism essentially seek to ensure the implementation of objectives contained in such documents as the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Protocol on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government. The USA has a critical role to play as a partner in support of NEPAD.

The implementation of NEPAD is first and foremost anchored on African resources and the resourcefulness of the African people. The partnership that is being built with international partners such as the G8 and the EU is intended to enhance this implementation and to accelerate the pace of implementation. The USA has the necessary capacity and resources to make a major contribution in this regard.

Furthermore, within the context of commitments undertaken in the UN Millennium Declaration, the G8 Africa Action Plan, the Monterrey Declaration, and the recently adopted Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and Political Declaration, the USA has an interest in contributing to the regeneration of Africa. This has been recognized in the world, namely the African Growth and Opportunity Act and the Millennium Challenge Account. These are most welcome, as are the African Education Initiative and contributions to the Global Health Fund, and should be applied in a manner that compliments Africa's transformation and development efforts, is consultative, not restrictive and that can benefit the widest possible number of African states.

The African Peer Review Mechanism will enhance African ownership of its development agenda, though a system of self-assessment that ensures that policies of African countries are based on best current knowledge and practices. An effective Mechanism, designed, owned and managed by Africans, must be credible, transparent and all-encompassing, so as to demonstrate that African leaders are fully aware of their responsibilities, and obligations to their peoples, and are genuinely prepared to engage and relate to the rest of the world on the basis of integrity and mutual respect. Therefore, the APRM must be independent and free from political interference and country review reports will be made public.

This will enable the Continent to make the necessary interventions in any situation considered to be at variance with the principles contained in these agreed documents. Apart from the

above, a mechanism to ensure mutual accountability between Africa and her development partners is also being developed. Increasingly, as the APRM comes into operation, there should be increased support for states meeting their good governance and democracy commitments. The USA needs to work with progressive leaders on the continent to consolidate the gains made in this field. This is the true spirit of partnership. It is important and welcome in this regard that a significant portion of the new resources announced at the Financing for Development Conference in Mexico have been explicitly targeted for Africa in the context of the G8 Africa Action Plan.

As regards to the immediate way forward, the Initial Action Plan must begin to be implemented with urgency. As first steps in the regard, states must begin to adopt the Declaration and put themselves forward for baseline reviews under the APRM and the APRM itself must be operationalized this year. The indices and benchmarks to measure good governance must be finalized in the next few months. The African Regional Economic Communities and individual states have to be intensively engaged in terms of G8 Africa Action Plan must be pursued with the G8 partners and the process of ensuring alignment and synergy between NEPAD and other processes and initiatives in Africa must continue. Every effort will be made to ensure that there is engagement with the business community and civil society on the continent in order to deepen ownership and to ensure NEPAD's long-term sustainability.

We are at a critical juncture in history. A core mass of leadership has developed both on the continent and abroad that are genuinely committed to the regeneration of the continent. Africa's advances in recent years and the convergence of agreement on international development goals and a common agenda for Africa illustrate this. Also, NEPAD provides three key new elements, namely it is African developed, managed, and owned; it brings the concept of a new partnership (with mutual commitments, obligations, interests, contributions, and benefits); and Africa is undertaking certain commitments and obligations in her own interests which are not externally imposed conditionalities.

Successes are already being registered. For example, there are accelerated and ongoing efforts to resolve Africa's major conflicts, negotiations to ensure the affordable supply and manufacture of essential pharmaceutical drugs in Africa are at an advanced stage, an African Energy Fund has been established to ensure the speedy implementation of cross-country energy infrastructure projects and the expended Okavango Upper Zambezi International Tourism spatial development initiative was launched during the WSSD. There is a sense of urgency now in moving from strategic development processes to implementation.

In conclusion, the conditions are set for the NEPAD objectives to be achieved. This unique opportunity must be firmly grasped, the present goodwill and momentum must be maintained and implementation of NEPAD must proceed without delay. For the sake of future generations of Africans, we cannot afford to fail. We invite the USA to be a partner in this historic endeavor. You have it in your power to make a difference and to decide how history will judge your contribution to the Renaissance of Africa.